

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

March 30, 2015

Jim Foote
National Monument Manager
Bureau of Land Management
1201 Bird Center Drive
Palm Springs, California 92262

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Land Exchange between Bureau of Land Management and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Riverside County, California (CEQ# 20140377)

Dear Mr. Foote:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The Bureau of Land Management proposes to exchange certain federal lands for properties owned by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The selected public lands (5,799 acres) and offered Tribal lands (1,470 acres) occur within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. EPA understands that the purpose of the exchange is to promote effective and efficient management of the public and Tribal lands by reducing the extent of "checkerboard" landownership.

Based on our review of the Draft EIS, we have rated the Preferred Alternative as *Lack of Objections (LO)* (see enclosed "Summary of Rating Definitions"). Please note that there is a typographical error on p. 3-44 where the federal Clean Air Act of 1972 is erroneously referenced instead of the federal Clean Water Act. We recommend that this be corrected in the Final EIS.

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review this Draft EIS. When the Final EIS is released for public review, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: ENF-4-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 972-3521, or contact Karen Vitulano, the lead reviewer for this project, at 415-947-4178 or vitulano.karen@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Clifton Meek for
Kathleen Martyn Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Section

Enclosure: Summary of EPA Rating Definitions

cc: Jeff Grubbe, Chairman, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians